

WICKLEWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held via Zoom video conferencing as allowed by the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of local authority and police & crime panel meetings)(England & Wales) Regulations 2020 on **Monday 7th September 2020** at 7.30pm

Present: John Seville (JS) Chair, Nick Kemp (NK) Vice Chair, Joel Pailes (JP), Richard Goodings (RG), Louise Downton (LD)

In attendance: Margaret Dewsbury (MD), Helen Frayer (HF) Parish Clerk

415. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Alan Gooding, John Hipperson and Richard Elliot. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

416. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

NK declared an interest in agenda item 11.7, RG declared an interest on agenda item 3

417. EXEMPTION FROM 6 MONTH ABSENCE RULE: JS explained that the rules governing parish councils allow that any councillor who does not attend 6 consecutive meetings may be considered to no longer be a councillor unless the parish council agree to accept their apologies as reasonable. As Councillors Hipperson and Goodings do not use the internet, this is now the 6 consecutive meeting that they have not attended. JS made the point that although initially the government rules did not allow for meeting in person, those rules have now been relaxed, and although the official advice is still to hold virtual meetings, it is legally possible to hold them in person and as the parish council have made the decision to continue to meet virtually it would not be fair to exclude these two councillors. NK proposed accepting their apologies for a further 6 months, JP seconded, all agreed.

PUBLIC FORUM

418. A resident asked what action was being taken on the two speed signs that have been knocked down. This will be updated in the Highways report.

419. MD has submitted a full report that will be posted with these Minutes.

420. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3rd AUGUST

Resolved: to agree and sign the minutes as correct. Proposed JP seconded LD, all agreed.

421. UPDATE FROM CLERK ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

HF reported that a meeting with the Bowls Club has been arranged for next week, all other items are on the agenda

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 422.** An email had been received from a neighbouring resident about the security lights on the village hall which had been moved by the builders and were shining in his property. This has been a previous issue. JS updated that he has adjusted the lights appropriately
- 423.** South Norfolk Litter Pick: Correspondence had been received re this, however the deadline to register has now passed.

FINANCE:

424. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Salaries	Clerk & Booking Clerk including backdated	390.84
HMRC	Month 5	61.20
Dream Team	Cleaning village hall, soap and toilet roll	304.50
Tim Carver	Verge cutting	120.00
PKF Littlejohn	External audit fee	240.00
E Fire	Callout for alarm box fault	108.00
AF Affinity	Electricity (Direct Debit)	56.84
TTSR	Grounds maintenance	369.00
	TOTAL	£1,650.38

Resolved: That all accounts as presented be paid. Proposed NK, seconded RG, all agreed

425. MONTHLY RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS REPORT

	Current	Premium	Total
Balance b/f from 28.6.20	9,031.21	12,500.00	21,531.21
Total receipts to 30.8.20	32,204.73	0.00	32,204.73
	41,235.94	12,500.00	53,735.94
Total payments to 30.8.20	1,522.88	0.00	1,522.88
	39,713.06	12,500.00	52,213.06
Inter Account Transfers	0.00	0.00	0.00
Closing Balance	39,713.06	12,500.00	52,213.06

- 426. Update re financial situation:** HF reported the loan for the hall roof has been received, hall hire income has also improved. As the hall use has increased, the Booking Clerk has come off full furlough and is now on flexible furlough working 5 hours a month. The cleaners have resumed full hours and emptying the litter bins. Alan Coombe was thanked for his help with the litter over the summer. Pitch fees from fish n chips and coffee cart received. We have also received £10,000 Small Business Covid Grant that we had previously been told we could not apply for. The rules have changed allowing parish councils to apply. The financial situation is therefore much healthier, although caution is required in case of a second wave and further lockdown.

- 427. Annual Audit Report:** The final report has been received from the external auditors PKF Littlejohn who have stated that it is all in order with no matters causing concern
- 428. Pay Scales:** The notification from NALC had previously been circulated. Note is taken that following a national agreement the pay scales have been increased by 2.75% plus one additional day annual leave, pro rata. This is backdated to 1st April 2020. The Clerk and Booking Clerk's salaries have been adjusted accordingly

HIGHWAYS

- 429. Report from Highways Officer:** JP reported that there had been a bad accident on Hackford road that had taken out the 30mph sign as you enter the village, as well as damaging a fence. This has been reported to Highways. The school flashing sign that was knocked down a few weeks ago is with Westcotec who have confirmed it is beyond repair and will need replacing. It is disappointing that it hasn't been replaced in time for schools going back. JP is chasing this. The SAM2 sign has been moved to Church Lane, however it is not operational as there appears to be a problem with the battery charger. JP will take this up with Westcotec as it should be covered by guarantee.
- 430.** RG reported that the double bend signs have now been installed either side of the dangerous bend on High Oaks Rd

PLANNING

- 431.** 2020/1055 Follyfoot Farm – The council had no views or comments
- 432.** 2020/1508 Agricultural building north of Church Lane – JS pointed out that under the original application 2020/0035 “change of use of a barn with associated building works from an agricultural use to a dwelling under Class Q” the applicant stated that the building was capable of conversion under Class Q and provided a Supporting Statement and Structural Appraisal to demonstrate this. Wicklewood Parish Council objected to the original application because it did not think the building was capable of conversion under Class Q. Under this application 2020/1508 the applicant is now seeking to demolish the existing building and replace it with a new building, stating that the construction of the existing building would likely result in a relatively poor-quality dwelling. Wicklewood Parish Council feels that this application is seeking to exploit a loophole in the planning system to construct a new dwelling in the open countryside that would not normally be allowed as it would not accord with the development plan. Furthermore, this application is seeking to erect a new separate cart lodge / store together with associated external works, which requires a change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage to be accommodated. This proposal completely alters the setting of the area. **LD proposed to object on these grounds. NK seconded, all agreed**
- 433.** The recent decisions were noted

434. There have been complaints received about the large number of very large lorries that are using Church Lane to access Norfolk Storage Solutions. These large vehicles are unsuited to a single track residential road. They have also caused damage trying to turn the corner from High Street, both to the road surface, due to the multiple manoeuvres they make and to the garden fence at the junction. The original planning application stated that the vehicle movements would be far less than the previous mushroom farm and would only be cars, small vans with some LGVs. Highways did not object to the planning application on this basis. However, very large HGVs are arriving on a regular basis. The nature of the businesses on the site also seems to be contrary to the planning application as there is a vehicle restoration business and also businesses trading from the site. It is not just storage. HF has emailed the planning enforcement officer but has not yet received a reply. LD queried if HGVs were kept on site, if so he would need an operating licence. Members of the public can also contact Planning direct to complain. **HF to chase planning for response for next meeting.**

VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS

435. **Report from Booking Clerk:** New line dancing lessons started mid August on Monday and Thursday mornings but exact number of hours and bookings will reduce as existing venues open and class sizes settle down. Risk assessment provided. Donna has booked all Sundays in October, November and first half-of December so that she can hold baby practice sessions/workshops. Yoga sessions will start again from 5 September, risk assessment provided. Two yoga sessions were paid for in advance and so those payments will be carried forward to Sept and Oct sessions. Yet to hear exactly when the Cinema Club will be re-starting, Hoppers have given notice that they will not be returning to the hall until January at the earliest and I suspect that the same is true for the Rainbows, Brownies and Girl Guides. Some refund of sessions is due to all these groups because of advance payment made. This will be done when invoices are raised for payment once new sessions start. There are occasional booking queries for new bookings and one or two are in the diary from before lockdown but it will depend on the restrictions in place as to whether they will go ahead. That means the bulk of income going forward to December 2020 will be Donna's dance lessons. Booking Clerk on half-time for now, to be re-evaluated during October.
436. **Village Hall roof:** JS updated that the roof has been completed and the guarantees received, although the invoice has not yet been received. The work revealed how badly the previous roof had been installed. It appears that the metal roof was never securely fastened down, the fixings only went into the polystyrene. They had to amend the specification for the work due to what they found underneath. There is a poured concrete roof so the insulation material was changed from that quoted so there may be some additional cost but this should be covered by the contingency sum. There was heavy rain during the work which has caused more water damage to the walls, but this will be resolved when the planned redecoration is done. The council thanked JS for all his work in the planning and overseeing of this project.

- 437. Hall Maintenance:** No further plastering quotes have been received so the two quotes received were considered. One quote was much cheaper than the other, from a local man who has a good reputation. **NK proposed accepting Alan Humphrey's quote, JP seconded, all agreed**
- 438. Playing Field Inspection:** NK reported that it was reasonably clean and tidy. The ground by the entrance gate is eroded and a trip hazard. **NK proposed adding more soil and laying a rubber grass matting to protect from wear. JS seconded, all agreed.** NK will obtain the matting and lay it. NK said he now has the keys to the padlock for the outside toilets but whereabouts of the padlock currently unknown.
- 439. Tree Inspection:** As previously circulated, Mr Hipperson had requested the large oak tree at the top of the playing field be felled due to several dead branches. The tree has since been inspected by NK's son who is an arborist, who is of the opinion that this is a magnificent mature oak and is not posing a danger to the public but could benefit from the dead branches being removed. This is in agreement with a previous inspection by a tree surgeon. There were also some small dead trees in the wooded area identified. **To get quote from David Keylock of Arborvolt Tree Surgeons for quote**
- 440. Review of Allotment Rents:** HF reported that the invoices for the coming year were due to go out and suggested reviewing the rates. They have been at their current rate £20 a year for standard plot, for many years. Not known when last increased but oldest records easily available show at that price in 2013. If price rose in line with RPI, they would now be £24. This is still cheaper than a half plot at Wymondham. **JP proposed rising by this rate, in same proportion for the two large sites. LD seconded, all agreed**
- 441. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** **It was discussed if the Council would continue to meet via Zoom.** It was agreed it would be best to continue in this way due to the amount of work, cleaning etc to meet requirements and the risk of a second wave.
- 442. DATE OF FUTURE MEETING**
The next meeting will be 5th October via Zoom. Items for the agenda to be sent to the clerk by 25th September